[172] 301 layers /271/ dating from that epoch. Its origin must be sought there, and it is now nothing more than a Neolithic vestige.

A number of little cases which the Tuareg wear suspended around the neck and resting on the chest may be considered ornaments. [531] They are little leather cases -- decorated, painted or embroidered, or even stamped in relief -- and they contain various little instruments. [415] Thus, there are mirror cases, needle cases, razor cases, scissor cases, toothbrush cases, etc., and little wallets in which the Tuareg put what they prize most -- money, a /strike-a-light/ steel box and its flint, or tobacco.

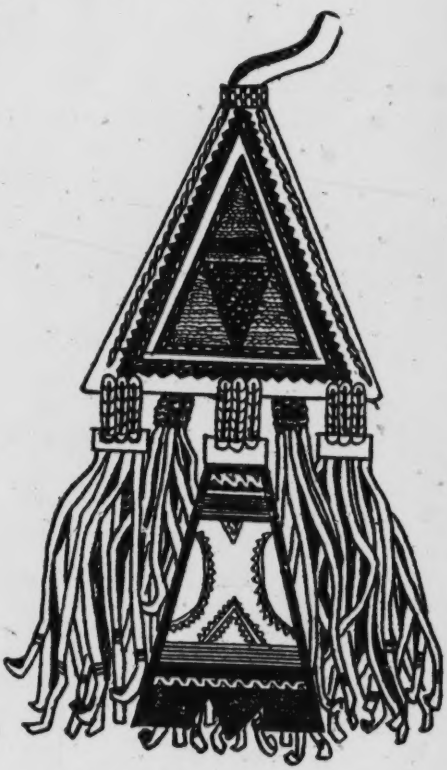


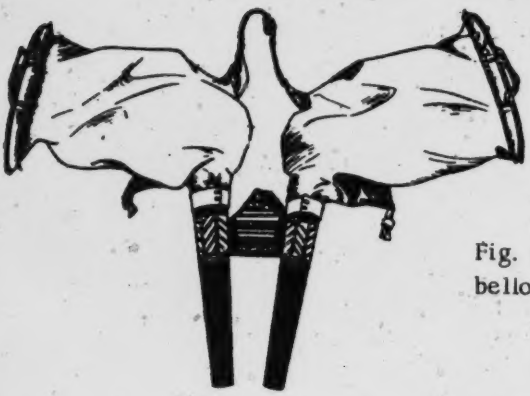
Fig. 42. Needle case of worked leather, with knife slits and embroidery. The background is red; the ornamental painting, black; the embroidery, red and green cotton.

301 751 /272/ They also wear quantities of amulets in leather or metal cases on their chests, their arms, or their hair. But [178] this custom, religious in origin, has evolved in the direction of ornamentation, for many of these amulet cases contain nothing.

301 Female jewelry is much richer and more varied. It is [328] all made of silver; gold jewelry is never seen among the Tuareg. They maintain [223] [777] that gold is unlucky for the possessor and that this metal corrupts people.

coins were for a long time the money standard in all of Central Africa. 177 326
(1) Copper is chiefly furnished by cartridge cases, and iron by abandoned

1. The Maria Theresa dollar was introduced into Africa at the beginning of the nineteenth century by navigators [177 436]



[325]

Fig. 49. Double forge bellows.

and traders who visited the Gulf of Guinea. With the iron bar, it became the basis of commercial exchange, and it was circulated in the interior of West Africa as well as in Abyssinia.

scraps of old carriages, auto springs, sheet metal, tin cans, etc.

Aluminum, which is beginning to penetrate into the Niger region, 177 328
is not yet utilized in the Ahaggar. So far the pipes and guys left to the four corners of the desert by wrecked airplanes have served only to make tent poles.